

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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-----058036 280341Z /75

R 271848Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6232
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL BREMEN

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EWWT, GW, UR
SUBJECT: SOVIET/GERMAN SHIPPING TALKS

REF: BONN 3020

1. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE REPORT FROM THE FRG TRANSPORT
MINISTRY SENT REFTEL, EMBOFF DISCUSSED THE JAN. 23-27
FRG/SOVIET TALKS WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIAL
(VON RUMOHR) WHO ATTENDED THE MEETINGS. VON RUMOHR
SAID THE SOVIETS CLAIMED THEY WISHED TO ENTER THE
CONFERENCES BUT THE FRG BLOCKED THEM BY IMPOSING
ONEROUS TERMS FOR ENTRY. THE SOVIETS POINTED OUT THEY
HAD NO NEED TO ENTER THE CONFERENCES SINCE THEY WERE
DOING MUCH BETTER OUTSIDE AND ASSERTED THAT THEIR
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LOWER PRICES WERE NOT "DUMPING" BUT ONLY A "DIFFERENT
WAY" OF CALCULATING RATES AND CARRYING CARGO. THE
SOVIETS TOLD THE GERMANS THAT USSR CROSS TRADE PRACTICES
WERE NO MORE THAN "GOOD COMPETITIVE BUSINESS."

2. VON RUMOHR SAID THAT ON THE AFRICAN BESTA LINE THE
USSR NOW HAS 36 DEPARTURES A MONTH FROM EAST AFRICA,

WITH MOST VESSELS ONLY 10 PER CENT FULL. THE WEST
GERMANS HAVE 6 DEPARTURES A MONTH WITH FULL HOLDS.
DURING THE TALKS, THE GERMANS AGAIN SUGGESTED THE USSR
ENTER THE BESTA LINE CONFERENCE AND OFFERED IT 5 FULLY
LOADED DEPARTURES PER MONTH. THE SOVIETS
DEMANDED 14.

3. DURING THE MEETINGS, THE FRG CONTINUOUSLY URGED
RESTRAINT ON THE SOVIETS, ESPECIALLY IN CROSS TRADE
RATE-CUTTING. THE GERMANS EMPHASIZED THAT IF THE
SOVIETS DID NOT RESTRAIN THEMSELVES, THE FRG WOULD BE
FORCED TO PROTECT ITSELF AND IF NECESSARY, THE FRG
WOULD INVOKE A LAW PROHIBITING FOREIGN OCEAN CARRIERS
FROM DEPARTING GERMAN PORTS WITH CARGO FOR THIRD
COUNTRIES WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERN-
MENT. VON RUMOHR POINTED OUT TO THE EMBOFF THAT IF THIS
REGULATION WERE INVOKED AGAINST THE USSR, IT WOULD
CANCEL THE 1959 FRG/USSR BILATERAL AGREEMENT. VON
RUMOHR SAID THE SOVIETS LAUGHED AT THE THREAT.

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